



## Mr Gilbert Melvin Thomas

October 14, 1941 - January 6, 2023

Mr. Gilbert (Gil) Melvin Thomas, passed away peacefully the evening of January 6, 2023 at his home in St. Johns, Florida as a result of heart-related issues. Gil was 81 years old.

Gil was born in Madison, Florida on October 14, 1941. He was the first-born child of Melvin and Ruby McCracken Thomas. In 1959, he enlisted in the US Navy, in which he served honorably, achieving the rank of Master Chief prior to retiring after 30 years of service in 1989. Gil was a patriotic supporter of the US military and his service in the Navy played a central role in his life, including leading him to meet his bride, Sue, in Santa Clara, California, where he was stationed. Gil's Navy career took the family to assignments in Millington, Tennessee; Jacksonville, Florida; Rota, Spain, and Pensacola, Florida, where he retired from the Navy and worked for the US Post Office prior to retiring again, and moving to St. Johns, Florida to be closer to his son, Scott, and family.

Gil was predeceased in death by his sisters, Nell Holton and Glenda Dietrich.

Gil, a loving and devoted husband and father, is survived by his spouse, Sue, of 52 years, his son, Scott (Blaine) of Ponte Vedra, his daughter, Alana, of St. Johns, and grandchildren Ava and Rowan. He is also survived by his sisters and brother, all of whom loved their "big brother" dearly: Kathryn (Eddie) Hale,

Lee; Rachel Penny, Lee; Tommie Bodenstein, Madison and Lester Thomas, Lee; as well as his brothers-in-law Hansel Holton and Perry Dietrich and his many nieces and nephews.

Gil loved to bring people together with stories and jokes and made friends wherever he went. Even during the past few difficult months, Gil told stories to hospital staff and doctors, finding ways to brighten their day. This generosity of spirit was Gil's trademark – wit, love of laughter, and a spirit of caring for others by bringing them joy. Gil enjoyed the thrill of a good yard sale and was constantly on the lookout for treasures for others that were somehow “just what you needed”.

Gil was an avid fisherman and was well-known for his skill in catching mullet in the St. Johns River off the Shands Bridge south of Jacksonville. Gil happily shared his techniques – and his fish – with others, who would call ahead to find out when he'd be there. Many a gathering focused on coolers filled with fresh fish Gil caught and prepared for others to enjoy.

Funeral services will be held graveside at Oakridge Cemetery in Madison on Saturday, January 14 at 1:00 pm, officiated by Deacon Perry Dietrich, joined by Pastor Trent Abbott, both of Macedonia Baptist Church. Arrangements are under the direction of Begg's Funeral Home of Madison. Condolences may also be shared by visiting [www.beggsfuneral.com/obituaries/](http://www.beggsfuneral.com/obituaries/)

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Macedonia Baptist Church Cemetery Fund are appreciated, and may be sent, in memory of Gil, to Chris Thompson, 1418 Longleaf Drive, Live Oak, FL 32064.

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

JAN 14. 1:00 PM.

Oakridge Cemetery

# Tribute Wall

KB

“ I never met Mr Thomas, I met his wife and daughter. He raised a wonderful daughter and a thoughtful wife. Prayers goes out the Family

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**Keith Brunson** - January 10, 2023 at 02:29 PM

BG

“ Although I never had the pleasure of meeting Gil, I had been acquainted with Sue from Women's Connections. My heart goes out and lifts up Sue and her family at this time.

*With the love of Christ, Barbara Gobbs*

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**Barbara Gobbs** - January 10, 2023 at 01:28 PM

AR

“ Gil and I were shipmates in Hawaii in 1968, and again at NAS Jacksonville in 1980. One of the Navy's finest Chief Petty Officers to wear the anchors and uphold US Navy traditions. Fair winds and following seas Shipmate, until we sail again. A.B. Jones, MCPO, USN Retired.

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**A.B. Jones, MCPO, USN Retired** - January 09, 2023 at 05:25 PM

DG

“ We enjoyed getting to know Gil with his jokes, and great sense of humor. Our sincerest condolences to Alana and Sue! May he rest in peace.

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**Diane Grayshan** - January 09, 2023 at 05:14 PM

LG

*So sorry for your loss Sue and Alana. He was a good guy and sure will be missed by many. Larry Grayshan*

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**Larry Grayshan** - January 09, 2023 at 05:22 PM

KR

*“ I'm sorry I never got to meet Gil in person but he has always been a great supporter of Women's Connection! Whatever we might need, he always seemed to find it for us :) He loved Sue & Alana very much and I'm fairly sure that's why he was 'on the lookout' for things we might need! He helped a lot of people and will be missed by many. You fought the good fight Gil! Blessings to your whole family. Kathy Royce*

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**Katherine Royce** - January 09, 2023 at 04:27 PM